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pared to what Mr. DeCamp saw. His description was better, if possible, than Théophile Gautier's, because it contained no exaggerations. But it was equally full of color, action, drama. The scene was present to the mind's eye, with all its alternations of suspense, anxiety, horror, disgust and exaltation. In conclusion, he summed up by saying, "I don't think it's much of a game."

Mr. DeCamp was born in Cincinnati, in 1858. His studies were pursued un-

der Frank Duveneck, at the Cincinnati School of Design, and at the Royal Academy in Munich. Among his honors may be mentioned the gold medal of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904, the Temple gold medal of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1899, and the first prize in a competition for decorations of the City Hall of Philadelphia. He is a member of the Ten Americans, the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the St. Botolph Club.

THE SECRET OF LIFE

SUGGESTED BY A VISIT TO THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF MODERN ART

BY ADELINE ADAMS

GAVROCHE is at it again, they say. The Uprooted Pine Tree! Hooray!

It is not known at what moment of the world's history the incomparable Gavroche first appeared with his bag of tricks to astonish the natives. Long before you and I found him scrawling gay obscenities over a *défense d'afficher*, his pointed ears and twinkling tail brushed the morning dew from the grapes of Hellas. He is reported under the fig-trees of Eden, where he is said to have raised Cain. His drawings disturbed paleolithic man. Let us frankly confess that we have all of us played Gavroche in the early stage of our studies.

But when Gavroche grows a beard, times change. He must put away childish things. Not indeed all his candor, all his brisk invention, all his faith in the undiscovered; but surely some of his youthful ignorances and attitudes.

One of the petty ailments of our art to-day comes from an overdose of the Childlike Attitude. A lusty student of three and thirty years tells me that he does not want to grow up. He says that this is the true philosophy of life, and that I will find it in James M. Barrie; he also mumbles to me something about Maeterlinck. Certainly it is not for me here to interpret these delicate spirits,

beyond saying that to me they seem not so much philosophers as poets, who might perhaps be chagrined to see their exquisite visions of life parodied and paraded and thumbed about as workshop receipts for conduct.

Further, much sentimental vapor is abroad as to the beautiful art to be found in children's drawings. Close observation dispels the illusions of closet oratory. Specialists who have studied thousands upon thousands of children's drawings know that beautiful art is not often found in them. Touching and interesting qualities they may indeed possess, qualities that appeal to our instinctive love and tenderness for children rather than to our knowledge of art. Exceptional children provide exceptions. For example, Mr. Maxfield Parrish's little son paints delightfully; taken all round, however, the paintings from the parent hand are really finer. Why not? Rightly may a man bow his heart before the divine candor that often, not always, breathes from a child's version of his vision of life; but we deny the growth of man, and belittle the meaning of life itself, when in a paradoxical straining after naïveté, we substitute childhood's lisp in place of manhood's free yet ordered speech. Assumed naïveté is one more way of lying.



SUMMER

EUGENE ZAK

Often in life, as in art, it is but something that we fall back upon, an instinctive, uncandid, uncouth device to conceal lack of mastery. Perhaps we dimly hoped that people would think we were trailing clouds of glory with us; but we were only confessing, unknown to ourselves, our souls' handicap. The grand manner was beyond us, and we seized on the way of Gavroche. That, too, may have had its effectiveness and charm; but our higher selves, when they were there, whispered that this was second rate.

Much of our modern naïveté, Primitivism, return to the barbaric, is but a new result from the old difficulties, lack of capacity and lack of training. The infantile simplifications seen in children's scrawls are far removed from the splendid, highly trained simplifications of Puvis, Millet, Leonardo, Pisano, Michelangelo, Hokusai. The notebooks of all such masters tell of laborious and loving days of "study, study, study." With a passionate reverence for Nature,

these men analyzed and synthesized over and over again. They knew enough to go down on their knees. They did not assume that a contempt for the elegantly little would confer a dominion over the awfully vast. Gavroche turned Ovalist in the interest of the "Genius of Sculpture" is measurably amusing, but there is nothing whatever that is awfully vast about his artistic handsprings. And in this hour of blind worship of half-gods, why not reflect for ourselves that when compared with the austere syntheses of Millet, the simplifications of Gauguin are peevish, and those of Maurice Denis a little fatuous? We shall still be able to admire these painters for what they are. The childlike attitude as an *idée fixe* shows degeneration in viewpoint. It is as if man, having by ages of effort learned to walk upright, should petulantly conclude that perhaps, after all, he would better achieve his adventure on all fours.

I know of a young painter who wants

to be a Borderlander. He says that to express his dream, he wishes that he might dwell just this side of insanity, and from that point of vantage get his message over. Now his message, or

man feeling; but the Borderland posture is inferior. For our art does not need Borderlanders and paradoxers and grip-losers; it needs men like Saint-Gaudens and Winslow Homer, with strict, well-



LE MADRAS ROUGE

HENRI MATISSE

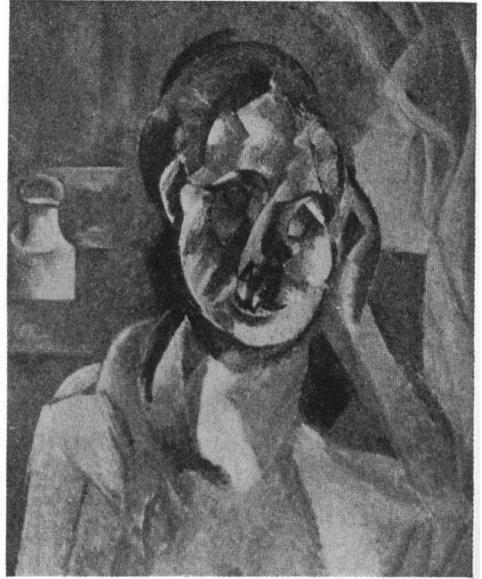
vision, is thus far scarcely more than a mind-picture of himself, with at least one eye in a fine frenzy rolling. He seems to be experiencing a strange sense of irremediable vastness within himself, something that might change our lives forever could we but know of it. Surely all can sympathize with this simple hu-

man feeling; but the Borderland posture is inferior. These men had no time for postures; they were busy about the secret of life.

To return in seriousness and with a reverent mind to child-study, I have observed a beautiful child of six, a so-called "bad boy," who in a crisis of suffering caused by some obscure nervous malad-

justment, rushed out into the open, shaking his fist against the sky, and shrieking in discordant reiteration, "Damn God, damn God!" In this blasphemous answer to a riddle that tortured him, he sought some compensation for conditions beyond his power to alter or to bear. There is little room here for the Comic Spirit, except to get angels' tears out of the way, so that Science may lend a hand to keep this poor little Gavroche from eternizing his wry attitude.

In the blasphemous defiance hurled against something they recognize as more powerful than themselves, wry souls seek a sinister satisfaction for their maladjustments. This ugly fact will furnish a reason for the carefully perverse placing of four toes where Nature has allotted five, the furious enlargement of one part of the body so that proportion is violently degraded from the harmonious type, the emphasized misplacement of features and limbs, the gross disorganizations of color and of form that the student is impudently solicited to admire in certain works at the International Ex-



WOMAN AND MUSTARD POT

PAUL PICASSO

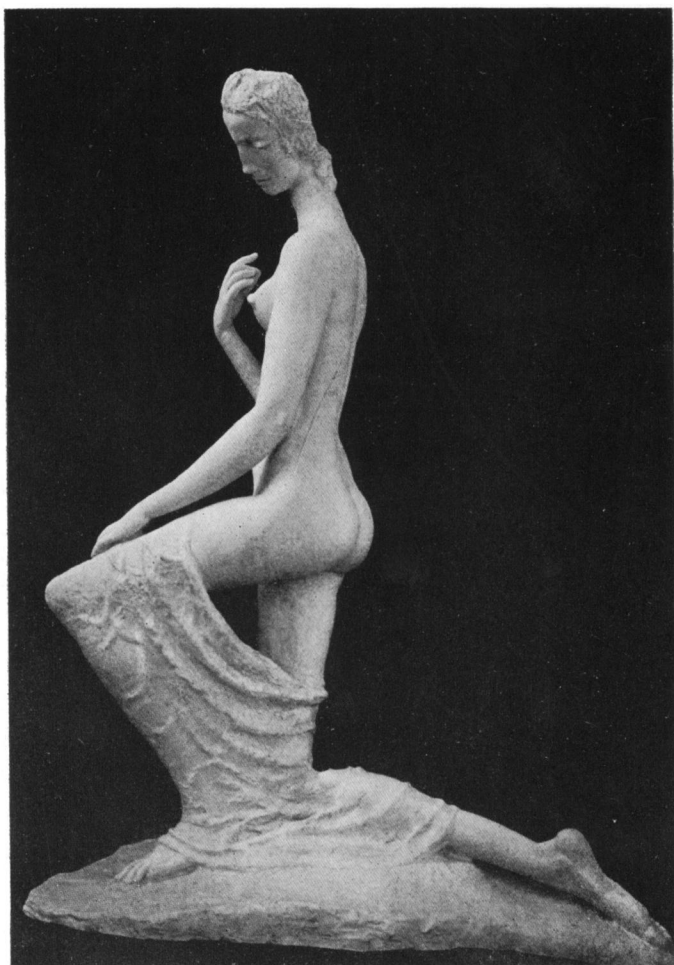


FAMILY LIFE

ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO

hibition. Of course, the leering element of farce is not lacking. It would be narrow, indeed, to impute to any individual the entire blame for these "artistic" crimes against Nature. Their cause is to be traced back to all sorts of heart-scalding disgraces inflicted upon man by himself in his long course toward God. Such paintings are found in the consultation-collections of asylums; psychologists have shown them to me with explanations unnecessary here. Surely it is the chief concern of the student to organize competent mental processes of his own, by means of the bracing and joy-giving studies his chosen work offers, rather than to muse on the fate of derelicts. It seems incredible that the violence of the so-called "strong" pictures could really browbeat the spirit of a student who has already learned anything of the true strength of Puvis, Millet, Monet, Corot, and who has comprehended anything of the beautiful fact that strength is proportion, not violence. But the incredible is taking place.

We have long been told that Art is or is not this or that, but we are never satisfied with what we hear. The mind of the artist holds this many-sided jewel so



KNEELING WOMAN

WILHELM LEHMBRUCH

dear that he cannot brook the descriptions and definitions other men darken it with. One says Art is not reformatory. Were the recent works of Picasso and Matisse Art, we should need to call it deformatory. But whatever this mysterious transfiguring light of the world is, we may be sure of one thing it is not. It is not, it never can be, an egotistical exposure of deteriorated soul-stuff. The sooner the young American art student recognizes, for himself, and by his own powers, that our art has no place whatever for antique corroding neurasthenias spewed out of European capitals, the better and stronger our future art will be.

It would seem unnecessary to expound the joys of sanity, in art as in all things; but meanwhile, the unwary, the irresolute, and the Borderlanders are being cat's-pawed into a fire that is far from being Promethean, or even Dionysiac. Further, it is but justice to France, our beloved second country, to state that French art is ill represented by freaks.

To pass to foreign work of a quite different order, the delicate nostalgia of Lehmbruch's "Knieende" should scarcely claim the student's attention as something imperatively prescribed for his own nervous system. This seductive figure, with its fragrance of Botticelli



NUDE DESCENDING A STAIR

MARCEL DUCHAMP

floating over Greek modelling and Gothic naïveté, is haunted by too many beauties from other countries to achieve a vital

beauty of its own. Aside from much virtuosity, the individual contribution of the sculptor to his own work is in this case



BALL AT ARLES

VINCENT VAN GOGH

the element of perversity shown by the disbrained head and highly exaggerated lengths. Something in us, not our highest, responds to this perversity; we can surrender ourselves to full enjoyment only when we part with something of our intellectual honesty. Let us face the fact that this work is delicately decadent, while Archipenko's three-toed family group is violently so. And since the former has "movement," and the latter "volume," let us note these things also, and examine the reasons, if any, why they should thunderstrike us at all.

As to the new school of emotion-painters who forswear representation, but label their pictures, we have not yet heard a coherent or logical statement of their position. The burden of proof rests heavily upon these performers. That curious splinter-salad—the descending nude—made an unusually direct appeal to me, for the reason that

it came upon me when I did not know it was there—in fact, when I was seeking something else; and, therefore, I would like to state what that appeal was. With my paleolithic bias toward representation fortified by an acquired taste for decoration, I found myself looking at I knew not what. My "emotional response" was rapid, for me. My mind asked, *method-madness? lost architect?* No! A drift of veneers piled up in the shop of a maker of musical instruments. That idea swiftly brought me the memory of a beautiful old man I once knew, a violin-maker, now dead; and with his image, as always, came crowding only sacred, beautiful, calming thoughts of elemental things, such as simplicity, home, pastoral country. It made me wish to find a human being in the canvas. Looking closer, I saw the inscription, "*Nu descendant un escalier.*" Rapid emotions of amusement-anger

were followed by associations of *Gavroche*, *épater*, *bourgeois*, *concierge*; then came a lovely idyllic memory of the little three-year-old son of a well-known painter, a child who, embarked on a chocolate adventure, really did descend a staircase *nu*, except for a two-sou piece and a small straw hat. Thus far, it seemed to me a not disagreeable picture, when suddenly I observed that I had been painting it myself; the artist had pushed the button of the uprooted pine tree, and the spectator had done the rest. What was there to do but to laugh at myself, entrapped sentimentalist assuming another person's burden of proof?

Standing between praisers of things past and paradoxers about things to come, the student will need to do some self-respecting thinking of his own. So much the better. Deep in the consciousness of the normal creative spirit—Gavroche or George Meredith—is the desire not merely to build its own house or sing its own song and then have done, but also to incorporate its work into the onward movement of man. "The one secret of life," writes Meredith in a let-

ter to a friend, "is to pave the way for the firmer footing of those who succeed us." That all marked departures will gain more sympathy from youth than from experience is not one of life's fine ironies; it is really one of life's large adjustments. The student will not narrow his sympathies, or, in other words, become a prig, simply because he takes pains to observe for himself that in art-expression, man's recourse to the child-like attitude, to the Borderland, to sinister satisfactions, or to brutish violence is, generally speaking, retrogression. Downward and backward movements of men's minds indirectly serve progress, because, when they become prominent, the normal upward instinct arms itself. Man is stimulated to seek the cause for his brother's disarray, and to strengthen his own position in the line of march. The simple fact is, our arts are like our natures, and a man's work shows his mind. The spirit of progress is "the one secret of life." That secret will not be found in the wriggles of Matisse's "Madras Rouge," or in the vapors of Picasso's "Pot de Moutarde."

AN EXHIBITION OF THE WORK OF ALBERT BESNARD

BY MARY LORD FAIRBANKS

AT the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston a loan exhibition of paintings, drawings and etchings by the French artist, Albert Besnard, was held recently. This collection was brought to Boston by the efforts of M. Guiffrey, who obtained the pictures from the French government and the city of Paris, from M. Besnard himself and private owners abroad, and a few portraits from Americans.

M. Besnard has painted in varied character, but without doubt the two most important lines he has followed are portrait painting and mural decoration.

The portrait of his family stands first

in interest, the center around which the collection must be seen. With his masterly touch M. Besnard has so tenderly painted the children with their mother, that any chance observer of the picture is roused by the same deep pleasure that the artist unmistakably felt. The children are expressed with a warmth of charm delightful anywhere, and here enforced by a strength and grace of composition which make it irresistible.

Among the other portraits is the extremely interesting study of the Princess Mathilde. Looking at this picture one is surprised to find how successfully the